Message Text

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43
ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-07 INR-07 LAB-04

   NSAE-00 SIL-01 L-03 /033 W
               --------------------   128589
R 241052Z SEP 76
FM AMEMBASSY TUNIS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4304

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E.O.11652: N/A
TAGS: ELAB TS
SUBJECT: LABOR MISSION ON DISPUTES SETTLEMENT

REF: STATE 205213

1. PROPOSAL FOR U.S. LABOR MISSION ON DISPUTES SETTLEMENT WAS
BROACHED ORALLY TO MINISTER OF SOCIAL AFFAIRS MOHAMED ENNACEUR
IN EARLY JULY BY AMBASSADOR. AT MINISTER'S REQUEST, AMBASSADOR
MADE FORMAL PROPOSAL BY LETTER IN EARLY AUGUST. MINISTER
HAS NOT REPLIED TO LETTER AND FOLLOW UP INQUIRIES BY EMBASSY
LABOR OFFICER HAVE NOT PRODUCED ANY ANSWER FROM MINISTRY WORK-
ING LEVEL. TUNISIAN BUREAUCRACY MOVES SLOWLY AND DOES NOT WEL-
COME EFFORTS TO SPEED ACTION ON ANY ISSUE. WE SUSPECT, HOWEVER,
THAT GOT IS RELUCTANT TO OPEN DOORS INTO SENSITIVE AREA OF
LABOR DISPUTES TO FOREIGN EYES. WHILE SENIOR MINISTRY OF SOCIAL
AFFAIRS OFFICIALS AWARE OF BENEFITS THEY MIGHT DERIVE
FROM U.S. LABOR DISPUTES MISSION, THEIR CUSTOMARY ANTIPATHY TO
MAKING POTENTIALLY CONTROVERSIAL DECISIONS HAS PREVENTED ACCEP-
TANCE OF OUR PROPOSAL.

2. IN THE MEANTIME, GOT HAS MOVED AHEAD WITH ITS OWN PLANS TO EX-
PAND AND UPGRADE DISPUTES SETTLEMENT MECHANISM IN SOCIAL AFFAIRS
MINISTRY. NEW LEGAL FRAMEWORK HAS BEEN ENACTED BY NATIONAL ASSEM-
BLY, TRAINING OF LABOR INSPECTORS (WHO PRESENTLY SERVE AS DIS-
PUTES MEDIATORS) IS BEING IMPROVED, AND CORPS OF INSPECTORS IS
BEING DOUBLED FROM 30 TO 60. WE HAD HOPED THAT PROPOSED LABOR
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DISPUTES MISSION WOULD HAVE CONTRIBUTED SUBSTANTIALLY TO THIS

EFFORT BUT, ALAS, TUNISIANS HAD OTHER IDEAS. AIRGRAM FOLLOWS
WITH MORE DETAILS ON GOT ACTIONS IN AREA OF DISPUTES SETTLEMENT.

3. WE APPRECIATE LABOR DEPARTMENT'S RESPONSIVENESS TO OUR REQUEST.
GOT MAY YET TELL US IT WOULD WELCOME LABOR DISPUTES MISSION AND
WE MAY REPEAT OUR PROPOSAL DURING COMING FISCAL YEAR.
MULCAHY

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: DISPUTE SETTLEMENT, PROGRAMS (PROJECTS), SEMINARS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 24 SEP 1976
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: GolinoFR
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976TUNIS06679
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760363-0348
From: TUNIS
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19760921/aaaaarnd.tel
Line Count: 68
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION NEA
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 76 STATE 205213
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: GolinoFR
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 21 JUN 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <21 JUN 2004 by BoyleJA>; APPROVED <22 JUN 2004 by GolinoFR>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: LABOR MISSION ON DISPUTES SETTLEMENT
TAGS: ELAB, TS
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006